**Inquiry Unit Template\***

**Curricular Topic or Text: Mysterious Circumstances (*The Adventure of the Speckled Band, The Tell-Tale Heart*)**

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| **Essential Questions:**  **Why do we like mysterious stories?**  **Why do we want to solve mysteries and how do we solve them?** | | | |  | |
| **Enduring Understandings:**  **(What you want students to come to understand and transfer to new situations)**  I want the students to understand. . .  -Mysteries appeal to us because they relate to our innate desire to know the unknown.  -Mysteries inform our inferential reading of other genres because of their focus on specific literary devices (i.e. setting, character, foreshadowing, mood, etc.).  -Mystery writers can’t cheat (or, if they cheat they have to know how and why they are breaking the rules). | | **Conceptual Knowledge:**  **(What you want the students to know)**  I want the students to know and be able to name. . .  -Literary devices vocabulary.  -How mysteries are different from and similar to other kinds of stories.  -Differences between a traditional detective story and a supernatural mystery, rules of each. | | **Procedural Knowledge:**  **(What you want the students to do)**  I want students to have the ability to. . .  **-Read** a mystery and be able to identify its individual components and how each relates to the story as a whole.  -**Write** their own mystery story using the stories they have read as models and using the specific elements of a mystery correctly.  -**Reflect** on the story they wrote, **comparing** it to the brief story they wrote at the beginning of the unit and the stories they read throughout the unit, **assessing** how effective their story is and what could be done differently. | |
| **Frontloading Activities (text-specific, task-specific, Essential Q):**   * Read “The Raven” in different contexts: they read to themselves, I read to them w/ lights off, watch *The Simpsons* version. Discuss differences. * Watch film noir clips and discuss visual elements of mystery stories and how those are related in a story. * Collaborative Mystery group assignment. Review and discuss the following day. * Have students bring in personal mystery examples (tv shows, movies, video games, books) and discuss mysterious elements of each. | | | |  | |
| **Scaffold of Activities:** For exploring and practicing concepts - leading to capacity to complete culminating project - demonstration of developed understandings  **PRINCIPLES OF SEQUENCING**   * Close to home→ Far From Home * Current Knowledge→ Need to Know * Visual→ Written * Short→ Long * Easy→ Hard * Concrete→ Abstract * Directly Stated→ Implied * Supported→ Independent * Whole→ Part→ Whole * Learning→ Doing→ Reflecting * Model→ Mentor→ Monitor | | | | **Things I am Thinking About as I Sequence Activities:**   * Necessary skills for completing culminating projects * How I can create engaging activities that are also meaningful * How I can support students before, during and after reading (for the text as a whole and each day) * How can I use models and modeling? * How to support them early on and gradually release the responsibility as the unit progresses * How I can design and include activities that guide them to Big Ideas and then “teach” through direct instruction and naming what we did * How I can blend reading, writing and language instruction * How I can use a diverse blend of activities (drama, argument, discussion, visual representation, etc.) | |
| **Texts and Overview**  Week 1  Texts:  Frontloading  “The Raven” by Edgar Allen Poe  Noir Movie clips  Overview:  Frontloading essential questions and concepts. | **Activities**  -Very first activity will have them writing a mystery for me, 100% prior knowledge to see what they come up with. These will be used later as part of the culminating assignment to see how their knowledge has changed.  -Discussion of mood with “The Raven.” They will read it to themselves, I will read it to them spooky-like with the lights off, we will all watch “The Simpsons” version, then discuss the differences.  -Watching clips of tv and movie mysteries, discussing what they have in common and what is different.  -Collaborative mystery group assignment. One day for writing, one day for reflection/discussion. | | **Connection to Unit Goals**  Unit goal of understanding mysteries is addressed and scaffolded prior to starting actual mystery texts to be studied. | | **Formative Assessments and proof of one’s learning**  The group writing activity will give each student a chance at writing some of the major literary elements we will be covering in a non-formal way allowing me to see where their understanding is at so I can cater my instruction accordingly. |
| Week 2  Text:  “Adventure of the Speckled Band” by Arthur Conan Doyle  Overview:  Traditional mystery story with daily readings focused on certain aspects of mysteries present in the story. | -Intro to Sherlock Holmes, movie/tv show clips. Discussion of what they already know and what they expect out of the story.  -Each day’s reading follows 10-20-10 format. 10 minutes for refresher from previous reading/prep for today’s reading, 20 minutes for reading, 10 minutes for reflection.  -Each day likely will need vocabulary frontloading as well, just touching on 2 or 3 words for that day’s reading that will be unfamiliar.  -After initial reading, reflect on story POV and CHARACTER. Who is telling the story? Why? How would it be different from Holmes’ perspective? Relate to POV decision students will have to make for their own stories.  -Brief British history lesson to cover the significance of the Indian element of the story, Regency, pounds as money; things that will be foreign to the students because they are actually foreign. | | “Speckled Band” is a traditional by-the-numbers mystery which will allow students to develop their understanding of what a mystery is by looking at the individual elements as they are encountered in the story. | | Participation in class discussion. I may need to figure how to include a writing exercise somewhere during the week. |
| Week 3  Text:  “Adventure of the Speckled Band” by Arthur Conan Doyle (cont.)  Overview:  Continued reading of traditional mystery with further application of concepts encountered during reading.  Start outlining personal mystery. | -Keep reading story in 10-20-10 format. Hopefully finished by mid-week.  -Claims and evidence exercise where students recreate a possible murder based on a picture and minimal text evidence as prep for Holmes’ use of LOGIC to solve the case.  -Anticipation discussion: how do they think the story will end, who is responsible, how did the murder happen? Connection to logic discussion.  -Discussion of the SETTING of the house. Students will draw the exterior of the house and the two main rooms described based on the descriptions in the story.  -Students will write their own description of a setting, hopefully related to their story, which another student will then have to draw based on the description. | | Similar to last week, except with the conclusion of the story students should see how all the pieces connect to create a satisfying whole.  At some point in reading, discussion should probably focus on if they care about what happens next and why to more closely address the question of why we like mysteries. | | Setting descriptions each student will write, as well as a rough outline of their story including how they are going to include elements of mysteries. |
| Week 4  Text:  “The Tell-Tale Heart” by Edgar Allen Poe  Overview:  Exploration of non-traditional mystery story with more supernatural elements. Does it still qualify as a mystery? Why/why not?  Continue personal mystery work, decide on inclusion of supernatural elements after reading “TTH.” Don’t expect many students to go this route, but still worth covering as an is/is not discussion. | -Read “TTH,” ideally in one day.  -Discussion the following day using Frayer model chart discussing what we know a mystery to be and how “TTH” differs from that.  -Constructive argument of whether or not “TTH” qualifies as a mystery.  -Revisit POV discussion, story this time is from POV of person who committed the crime.  -Focused in class time working on story outlines. Cover tips for mystery writing from the Scholastic website. Show class a model of my own mystery I will have written.  -Mini-lesson on how to write, properly punctuate dialogue. | | Is it a mystery if we already know how the crime happened? Are we drawn to mysteries because of the elements the two stories share or the ones they don’t share? | | Frayer model chart and final outline of story. |
| Week 5  Texts:  Student choice mystery story (in groups). Need to consult school librarian for appropriate stories.  Overview:  Ideally four more mystery stories to be read, one per person in each group. Stories will then be jigsaw’d to the rest of the group explaining elements of mystery present and how they work.  More personal mystery work. Rough drafts done by the end of the week. | -Reading time in class for individual stories, which will be on photocopies so students can make notes on mystery elements as they come across them.  -Jigsaw activity where the members of each group report back with a summary of their story, how mystery elements were used, and if it qualifies as a mystery (one story ideally will be supernatural like “TTH”).  -Rest of the week working on writing rough drafts of stories. | | This section will really get after why they like mysteries because part of the jigsaw exercise can include whether or not they liked the story with reasoning. | | Rough draft of story. |
| Week 6  Texts:  None  Overview:  Revision and computer time to work on personal mystery stories. | -I will have read the rough drafts over the weekend and made comments. Students will spend one day revising then two or three days typing their stories in the computer lab.  -Only after their story is done will the students work on their reflection. Possibly wishful thinking, but I would like students to take their stories home over the weekend, read them, make any minor editing changes necessary, fill out a reflection worksheet I will provide them, then be ready to print the final copy of the story and type a reflection directly from the reflection worksheet. | | Hopefully by this point the students know what they like about mysteries and are writing their own stories as something they would like to read. Whether this is true or not will be material for the reflection. | | Final story and reflection turned in. |

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| **Culminating Project** | |  | |
| **Project Description:**  Mystery story using and showing comprehension of literary elements of mystery stories covered throughout the unit.  Content:   * Correct use of mystery story literary devices. * Reflection explaining conscious and correct usage of those devices. * Comparison of their story to pre-unit story they wrote and stories we read throughout the unit.   Form:   * Narrative story * Reflection | **Skills and Understandings Necessary for Completing Task:**  -Structure of mystery stories.  -Rules of mystery writing.  -Planning of writing a mystery; working backwards.  -Literary Elements used in mystery stories.  -Purpose of literary elements used in mysteries; why they are there.  -Micrsoft Word formatting.  -Dialogue formatting. | | **Summative Assessment/Proof Positive of Learning**  **(Including UNDERSTANDING and PERFORMANCE criteria)**  (See Wiggins and McTighe Chapter 7 and 8 for help with this)  **Understanding**  A student who really understands. . .  Can Explain:   1. What the purpose is of literary elements they use in their stories. 2. How their use of those literary elements affects their stories.   Can Interpret:   1. The ways literary elements of mysteries are used in the stories we read in class and apply those to their own story.   Can Apply:   1. Ideas and concepts learned from other stories to the writing of their own story. 2. Visual cues from film clips to their written counterparts.   Can see in Perspective:   1. The big picture idea that while there are certain rules to be followed when writing a mystery story, there is still a lot of room for personal interpretation.   Can Demonstrate Empathy:   1. ?????????????   Can Reveal Self-Knowledge:   1. Through reflection portion of final assignment by honestly assessing how well they used the literary elements and what they may have done differently (w/o being penalized for criticizing their own work).   **Performance**  In the final product I want to see. . .  Product: A mystery story of the student’s own creation which makes use of the literary elements of mystery. Student then reflect on the process and their story and honestly critique the effectiveness of their work.  Process: Students will receive credit for writing-process related tasks such as brainstorming, rough drafts and revising, all of which should lead up to the final story itself and serve as the basis for a good portion of the reflection. Credit awarded more for completion than for quality. |

**Other Thoughts/Brainstorming/Connections to Next Unit**

The next unit will be folklore, which connects nicely with mysteries, as folktales are cultural mysteries which are solved through storytelling. All the mystery elements discussed will also serve as scaffolding for the rest of the year as the focus on character, setting, plot, etc. will now be familiar to students as we talk about other kinds of stories where how those things are used might not be as obvious as it is in a mystery.